

OMG!!! About DCR - have you heard?  
A volcano erupted on May 23rd  
From their homes people are fleeing with  
their family  
Trying desperately to survive this catastrophe  
Additional damage is a horrific crime  
Looks like we left the DCR just in time



Another reminder of how fortunate we are  
As now we're entering Rwanda  
Rwanda, Oh Rwanda  
One of the smallest countries in Africa  
The "land of thousand hills"  
Kigalia, the country's capital



The population of over 12 million is quite  
young  
Youngsters will make the country strong  
Between 1950 to 2021 life expectancy In-  
creased by 30 years to 69, pleasantly



Your countryside shines bright  
But not everything is always right  
Of your genocide Roméo Dallaire  
Made us all very aware

Why a genocide? I knew you'd ask  
That's why I brought this - my flask  
Take a sip and brace yourself  
By so many wars Rwanda was engulfed  
Arguments over who is better is nothing  
new

Catholics vs Protestants vs Muslims vs Jews  
The Tutsi, Twa, and the Hutu are the 3 subgroups  
Two of the 3 had military troops  
The Tutsi and Hutus fought for control  
The Twa were victims - poor souls  
Their turmoil brought about genocide  
Many were killed. None got a free ride.

Before these three sub groups arrived  
Hunters and gathers survived  
For years, all through the Stone & Iron Ages  
Along came the Hutu and the Tutsi in stages  
Class distinction was the basis of their fights  
Don't all fights boil down to who is right?

Stone Age tools



What about the Twa? Good question  
Their numbers went into recession  
But some became dancers in the Royal Court  
Others were slaughtered by those who fought

Then arrived colonial rule again  
Primarily Germans and Belgians  
Belgians centralized power & famine reduced  
Education health and public works were introduced  
In 1935, Belgians promoted Tutsi supremacy  
And Initiated a system of card identity  
Preventing movement from one class to another  
Tensions between the Tutsi and Hutu. Oh brother!  
In 1973, in a military coup  
Led by a Hutu, Juvénal Habyarimana  
Who was president until 1994



Response to the genocide was slow everywhere  
In spite of the pleas from Roméo Dallaire  
No UN or US intervention came to be  
The Rwandan Patriotic Front, led by Paul Kagame,  
a Tutsi military leader, put an end to the genocide  
Became vice-president. When the president resigned,  
Became the sixth president. Won elections - can't be  
denied

The President is elected every 7 years  
And could serve two terms, constitutionally  
Kagame had the constitution changed in 2015  
Eliminating the number of terms so he could remain queen -  
Opps I mean king - perhaps until 2034  
Suppression of dissent continues and more



The rationale is to prevent another genocide  
As competition between the groups hasn't died

Corruption in Rwanda is lower than most other African countries  
Constitutionally, an Ombudsman has specific duties  
Preventing and fighting corruption  
Because they cause more disruption



Chamber of Deputies building

The widespread loss of lives created problems galore  
Impacted health and behaviour and much more  
Including a large decline in investment & drop in GDP  
In so many ways the genocide undermined the economy

Because Rwanda has few natural resources  
Agriculture is the main economic source

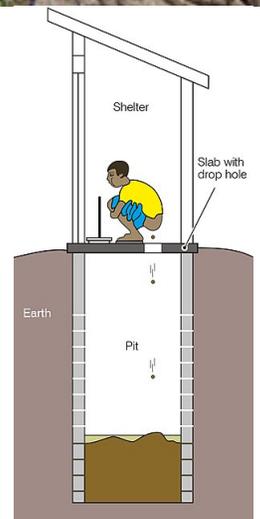
Farmers grow food to support their families  
But there's often not enough food, unfortunately



Rural water pump

'pit-latrines'

Access to safe water is increasing.  
Good to know.  
Heartbreakingly, though, sanitation remains very low -



Publicly shared 'pit-latrines' are something we will likely see  
As in rural and urban areas, they are used by the majority

Access to electricity is increasing  
As is educational completion

Children in a Rwandan primary school, using laptops supplied by the One Laptop Per Child program



Healthcare quality is also quite low  
As is the medical professional to population ratio  
Health is now a government priority  
COVID has likely affected negatively  
HIV/AIDS prevalence has not fallen  
In spite of all the efforts callin'



Rwanda has 14 national holidays  
We just missed the Genocide Memorial Day  
The last Saturday of each month is *umuganda*,  
Let's import this holiday from Rwanda



Community service from 8 to 11 am  
is mandatory  
Everyone from 18 to 65 years must  
be participatory  
*Umudanda* means coming together  
for a common purpose to achieve an  
outcome  
for the benefit of a person, society or  
nation

Traffic is stopped and streets are cleaned  
Roads, bridges, schools, houses, are built as is just about everything  
Making Rwanda a much more vibrant and cleaner country  
Thanks to monthly event holiday, you see.

Tourism is growing quickly  
In spite of the genocide legacy  
The country is considered a safe destination  
So, we can travel here without hesitation

Sometimes music can cure the soul

Here are some lyrics you might like to know:

*Rwanda, yeah your moon shines bright*

*Rwanda, over planned genocide*

*Rwanda, won't you be strong?*

*Like a lion*

*It's complicated when facts come in slow*

*Mass destruction, mass confusion*

*What's the difference to the orphan or to all the dead*

*When no more machine guns strike and there's silence instead*

Did they know anything about post traumatic stress?

After reading those lyrics, what would be your guess?

Music and dance are part of Rwandan ceremonies

The cow dance, *umushagiro*, is performed by women

The *intore*, dance of heroes, is performed by men

The drumming is also usually done by men

*Intore*                      A reconstruction of the ancient King's Palace at Nyanza



Contemporary music is more like hip-hop

Blended with rap, regga, R&B, and dance hop

Art is colourful, vibrant and imaginative

Baskets woven for use but are quite decorative



Since the genocide there has been an emergence of literature and film  
Witness accounts, poetry, essays, fiction. May overwhelm

Maybe you have seen one of these:

*Hotel Rwanda, 100 Days, Shake Hands with the Devil, Sometimes in April, or Shooting Dogs*

The last four were filmed in Rwanda

Featured survivors as cast members

The government's Sports Development Policy is quite interesting

It promotes sports as an avenue for "development and peace building"

Sports has a variety of objectives including education,

Cricket is becoming more popular in the nation.

Teams in all the games: Olympic, Paralympic, Commonwealth

African Cup, World Cup and the Kagame Interclub Cup

Naturally, the flora and fauna are beautiful - absolutely!

A rich diversity of praying mantises discovered recently



Everywhere poverty is a concern  
So it's always good to learn  
The government's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy  
Has several goals including more household access to electricity



If you're hungry, we could  
eat  
Some potatoes, as they  
are sweet  
Some rice and beans Or  
maybe tilapia would fill  
your dreams



We want to relax and kick  
off our shoes  
Maybe catch a bit of news  
The Stanley Cup playoffs have begun  
Wonder if the Maple Leafs have won  
That would surely bring a cheer  
So loud, even over here, we may hear..

Hopefully the Tutsi & Hutu groups don't  
ever again go to war  
That would cause even more tragedy  
than before



About Rwanda, here's what I like  
The country seems to be trying to get  
things right  
I wonder if in Uganda the same will apply  
Nighty night, Rwanda. Best wished & good bye